Operationalising the Radio-Active Wastes storage at Tarapur

1459. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the two projects set up to contain and store radio-active wastes at Tarapur Fuel Reporcessing plant are yet to be made fully operational even though these projects were schedeuled to be completed by 1978 and 1985;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the measures taken by Government to effectively tackle the radiatin hazards posed to the surroundings of nuclear plants; and

(d) what is the existing position with regard to making the projects fully operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISITRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The waste immobilisation Plant at Tarapur for treating high level radioactive liquid wastes is fully operational. Construction of the complementary facility for storage of the immobilised high level lradioactive wastes has also been completed. The latter facility is currently under review by the regulatory authorities for clearance from the safety angle. The plant for treating high level radioactive wastes as well as the facility for storage of immobilised wastes are first of their kind to be established in India. They required technical innovations based on the experience gained at various stages, including commissioning trials.

(c) The design of the nuclear plants incorporates a number of technical features specifically aimed at preventing any undue radiation hazard in the public domain. Further, they are operated according to the criteria that are spelt out in detail in the form of technical specifications for plant operations. These include, inter alia, limits on the radioactive substances in the effluents. The effluents are sampled and monitored to ensure that radioactivity is within the stipulated limits. These follow the guidelines of the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP) which are, in turn, endorsed/ approved by the Indian Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). In addition, Envirnmental Survey Laboratory (ESL) established at each plant site regularly surveys the environment for levels of radio-activity to ensure that the levels are below the specified limits. Experience based on such detailed monitoring over the past several years has, in fact, shown to that the radioactivity levels in the environment around the nuclear plants are only a small fraction of the limits permitted in this regard by the AERB.

(d) The waste Immobilisation Plant is fully operational. The storage facility for the immobilised waste has been constructed and is under review by the regulatory authorities before it becomes operational.

Restructuring of State Level Power Industry

1460. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have suggested some measures to State Governments towards restructuring or reforming the state level power industry;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof;

(c) what is the State Governments reaction thereto particularly from the Maharashtra Government;

(d) whether Government propose to assist the State Governments in this regard; and